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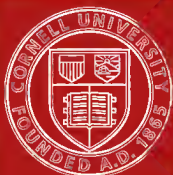


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**Education as the training of personality**



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# **EDUCATION**

**AS THE**

# **Training of Personality**

**An Inaugural Lecture**

**Delivered by**

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**Professor of Education and Director of the  
Department of Education.**

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—To—

*The Right Hon. SIR WILLIAM MATHER, LL.D.,  
A Believer in Educational Ideals,  
to whom is due the printing of this Lecture.*

*In revising this Lecture for the Press I have added a few paragraphs which had to be omitted when the Lecture was delivered.*

*H.B.S.*

# EDUCATION

as the

## Training of Personality.

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The last twenty years have witnessed a great development of interest in the scientific aspect of education, a development which bids fair to revolutionise our whole educational procedure. And in the promotion of this interest in the science of education no other English University has, I believe, played so large a part as has the University of Manchester. Its three professors of education have all been, and two of them happily still are, leaders in the work. Professor Withers, whose untimely death we still deplore, was one of the most far-sighted pioneers. Professor Sadler is our great example of the philosopher-king in education, for to an unique experience of educational administration he has added an unrivalled knowledge of modern educational history and a profound comprehension of contemporary problems. Professor Findlay has not only enlarged our knowledge of scientific teaching methods, but has shown us how closely education is connected with the other functions of the body politic, and has pointed out new lines of advance both in his writings and by his personal example. Each of these men in his own fashion illustrates that

union of practical skill and theoretic insight which has always marked the leaders of educational progress. I need hardly say how deeply I feel the honour of being allowed to follow where these men have trodden, and to help Professor Findlay in the work he is still doing. To their knowledge I can lay no claim, but I trust I shall not be unfaithful to the tradition they have established if I take as my subject a principle of practical importance to all teachers, and if I venture to speak as a school-master to schoolmasters.

One of the most characteristic features of our national life during the last three hundred years has been the growth of interest in our material environment, that is, in the physical and chemical properties of the bodies by which we are surrounded. This interest has been both theoretical and practical. On its theoretical side it has produced the great body of systematic knowledge which we call physical science, together with the modes of thought characteristic of this science. On its practical side this same interest has enabled us to turn to our own use the resources of the material world in ways of which earlier centuries never dreamed. There are signs that we in our own time are witnessing the beginning of the development of a similarly effective interest in the world of man and human society. It is not impossible that our children's children will witness the evolution of a body of human sciences not less systematic and comprehensive than the knowledge of physical science which we now possess. It is possible also that the growth of these new sciences will be accompanied by a transformation in our

social institutions comparable in extent to the transformation which has already taken place in our practical relations with the world of matter.

Now of these social sciences education is not the least important, and in education at any rate we may look forward with some confidence to rapid progress being made in our own and the next succeeding generations. But if this progress is achieved it will be a progress both in educational theory and educational practice. Theory and practice are so closely connected—are, indeed, only two aspects of one fundamental interest, that neither can make any great advance except with the co-operation of the other.

For in the first place theory owes its birth to practice. Practice gives us the experience which it is the first function of theory to explain. Theory, says Bagley, “should take successful practice and find out what principles condition its efficiency ; and if these principles are inconsistent with those heretofore held, it is the theory that should be modified to suit the facts and not the facts to suit the theory.” And, secondly, all practice implies theory. Educational work of any kind involves some plan of action, some acknowledgment of an aim, some judgment as to the means to be employed ; that is, it involves some theory, even though this theory may be ill thought out. As a matter of fact no one is really more theoretical or more dogmatic in his statements than is the one-sided advocate of practical experience. He is so sure of his ground because his theory is so limited, because he tends to ignore all facts outside his personal

field of interest. "Would that we all considered this fact," says Herbart,\* "that each man has experience only of what he has really tried. A schoolmaster of ninety years has the experience of his ninety years' routine ; he is conscious of his length of labour, but can he also rightly criticise his methods and their results ?" He can only do so in the light of a theory which was both comprehensive and coherent.

If theory, therefore, cannot exist apart from practice, neither can practice be divorced from theory. And if education is to participate in the progress of the social sciences, educational theory must in even fuller measure do justice to the facts of our experience as teachers, and practice must grow more effective under the guidance of this theory.

There is, I think, evidence that this co-operative advance of educational theory and practice is already taking place. We have with us men who are both our guides in theory and our leaders in our practice, men like the present Vice-Chancellor of Leeds. Teaching methods are in many schools becoming more enlightened, as the teachers take a more scientific interest in their profession. Many minds are engaged in the work of laying secure foundations upon which a veritable science of education can be built. Even our school administration is beginning to respond to the demands of educational theory. Here and there we find members of Local Authorities or of Boards of Governors who have caught something of the new spirit.

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\* Werke ed. Hartenstein, vol. x., p. 9.

But this movement of co-operation between our educational theory and practice is at present only in its initial stage. We still find schoolmasters who distrust all systematic educational theory, and who question the value of any training of teachers by exponents of such theory. And what is even more significant, we find a widespread failure on the part of the general public to realise that there is any science of education in existence. Most men who have gained a position in other walks of life are prepared to speak in public on educational topics and to prescribe the practice to be followed in our schools, being, as it seems, unconscious of the fact that the nature of education has at any rate been seriously considered by some of the greatest thinkers of mankind, and that, while much is still uncertain, there are some facts and principles which have been definitely ascertained. Among these amateur speakers and writers I do not include men who give us the results of their experience of the practical effect produced by education upon our boys and girls. Large employers of labour, for instance, have often valuable criticism to offer. I refer only to men who regard vague platitudes or airy speculation as a sufficient substitute for knowledge of the subject.

The prevalent distrust of educational theory is, however, not due solely to ignorance or stupidity. It is the result in part of the failure of many writers on education to appreciate the special problems which confront the teachers in our English schools. Take, for example, a man like Herbert Spencer, whose writings have done much to widen our educational horizon. We feel that, in

spite of his broad outlook, he has very little conception of the actual conditions of school life. Speaking generally, educational theory has not succeeded in doing justice to the heritage of practical skill and wisdom in the teaching and management of boys which has accumulated in the course of centuries. And yet, as the advocates of practical experience rightly urge, unless a master enters into this heritage he will never be efficient in his work. We might have expected that the Training Colleges would have devoted themselves to the task of expounding the theoretical foundations of the best traditional practice, and so have rendered practice more uniformly intelligent. But, unfortunately, they have often been content to teach an abstract and unreal form of theory, whereby their own influence has been lessened and the movement for training secondary teachers much delayed.\*

If, therefore, we are to attain that union of theory and practice which is the condition of educational progress, our theory must become more adequate to the facts. It must take full account of the practice of our best schoolmasters, explaining the principles which underlie it and the reasons for its effectiveness. It must deal with the realities of school life and work, and not be content either with suggestive generalities or an unintelligent empiricism.

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\* On the other hand, the proposal to treat a period of practice in a secondary school as an adequate preparation for secondary teaching is, in my opinion, open to grave objection. It implies that teaching is mainly concerned with "special method," and is little more than an empirical art, without scientific basis. The process would be largely that of giving "tips for teachers."



I propose in this lecture to consider what appears to me to be one particular weakness of some current educational theories, namely, their inadequate appreciation of the significance of personality. Many writers fail, I think, to do justice to our experience as teachers because they do not keep constantly before us the very obvious fact that the boys and girls whom we try to teach are living, human persons.

It may, however, be objected that I am trying to force an open door. No one, I shall be told, denies that school education is the process of training boys and girls as living persons. This is assumed, at any rate implicitly, in all discussions of the subject. My contention is that the personality of our boys and girls, instead of being regarded as too obvious to be mentioned, must be put in the forefront of the argument, and that this personality must be recognised in the fullest possible sense.

But the question at once arises, what then do we mean by personality ?

I cannot pretend to offer any adequate answer to this question. Personality, says Lewis Nettleship, is probably the hardest of all subjects. All I can do is to indicate certain characteristics of personality which are of importance for our purpose.

The characteristics of a person to which I shall confine myself are three, viz., unity, intrinsic value, and the power to create his own value by the achievement of his interests. The meaning of these phrases will, I hope, become clearer in the sequel.

The first characteristic, then, of personality is its unity, however this unity may be explained or qualified. We are conscious of ourselves as living agents, relatively distinct from other people and the world around us. The development of this consciousness of self and of our ejection of it into other persons has been described by Baldwin and others, and need not detain us here. We each have a definite point of view, peculiar to ourselves, from which we look out upon the world, and a particular set of interests which are not the same for other people as they are for us. To borrow Professor Alexander's terms, we *enjoy* our own experience, we *contemplate* the people and things outside us. And this unity of experience involves the corollary that our thoughts and feelings and desires have no independent significance; they are significant only as elements in the whole, which is ourselves. We feel, as William Wallace puts it, "that *we* exist in our several modifications, that the various feelings, desires, emotions are ours, belong to us, have a common ground and a mutual interdependence, thus constituting a system with necessary relations."\*

This unity of the self has important consequences for education. For instance, it follows that in our work as teachers we must recognise the individual point of view and interests of each boy or girl. All education must be based upon sympathetic insight into the minds of those we teach. We must not treat them simply as units with attributes which for practical purposes are the same. If this principle were always followed we should not find

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\* Lecture, p. 286.

children of four sitting on benches for five hours a day and spending most of their time on lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic. And, again, since each thought or feeling derives its significance from the whole personality of which it is an element, we must remember that the training of any special aptitude is of value only in so far as it improves the boy's life as a whole. It is an error to try and cultivate one side of a boy's mind in isolation from the rest. Yet it was two centuries before men fully realised that the intensive study of Latin grammar did not provide a complete form of mental training.

Secondly, a person has as such intrinsic value, and has therefore the right to be treated always as an end and not a means. It may, I think, be shown that our whole sense of value is ultimately derived from our consciousness that we ourselves as living persons are intrinsically valuable. "Our ultimate standard of worth," says T. H. Green, "is an ideal of *personal* worth. All other values are relative to value for, of, or in a person."\*

According to this doctrine the ultimate purpose of society and its institutions, including its schools, is the increase of the personal value of its individual members. Hence in education we must aim, in the first instance, not at increasing our national efficiency, nor even at the improvement of the social order, but at promoting the right development of our boys and girls as persons. Other purposes are not excluded, but it would be wrong to treat our scholars primarily as members of society who

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\* Prolegomena, Sec. 184.

owe their value to the contributions which they make to the progress in civilisation of the nation or of the race.

And, thirdly, we must ourselves take an active part in the process by which we, as persons, obtain value. Our value is, indeed, in the last resort due to our position in the scheme of things; it is of grace, not works. But it becomes actual only by our own exertions. The process is one often involving strain and stress, demanding courage and endurance. "If the 'searching of our hearts and reins,' " says William James, "be the purpose of this human drama, then what is sought seems to be what effort we can make."\* "It is an everlasting duty," says Carlyle, "the duty of being brave. *Valour* is still *value*."† If, therefore, the aim of education is to make our boys and girls into more valuable persons, this aim will be attained only by rendering them more capable of effort, more courageous and enduring.

The implications of this principle are important for our present purpose, and we shall put the point more definitely if we say that our value as persons is measured by the worthiness of our interests and the extent to which we are capable of achieving them. This mode of statement I cannot now attempt to justify, but must ask you to accept it as sufficiently accurate for the general survey to which we must confine ourselves.

What I mean by the achievement of an interest may be made clearer by an example. Let us take as an illustration the interest we may feel in botany.

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\* Text Book of Psychology, p. 458.

† Heroes, p. 29.

By the achievement of an interest in botany I mean the realisation of the value for ourselves and others of the various aspects of the vegetable world. This realisation is a gradual process, and involves effort in practical activity no less than effort after fuller knowledge. The interest may begin with the child's desire to pick a daisy ; it may end in a life's devotion to the study of plant life. As we achieve our interests they grow more intense and also more comprehensive. This makes their achievement intrinsically valuable.

The consciousness that this is so, that it is really worth while to achieve our interests, gives rise to a feeling of satisfaction which accompanies all activity when it is at all successful. In other words, we have what I shall call an interest in achievement. This is the interest we try to stimulate in order to make slack boys keen. It is the achievement of this interest which makes a form feel satisfied when it is working hard and getting on. "What is it," asks Mr. J. W. Headlam in his brilliant defence of a classical curriculum, "What is it that gives the peculiar tone and strength to a strong well-taught sixth form ? It is the unconscious feeling of intellectual growth and energy arising from the willing and pleased absorption in the noblest works of letters and the greatest of intellectual problems."\* This feeling can, I believe, be developed in any form, and is the satisfaction of the interest in achievement.

But besides this general interest in achievement we have also interests in particular aspects of the world

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\* Special Reports, 20, p. 43.

around us, and these particular interests fall roughly into three main classes, connected respectively with our material environment, with our fellow-men and the social groups of which they and we are members, and with the spiritual realities of art, philosophy, and religion. In the first place, the material world is one great field in which our interests can be achieved, and this is so because the world is for us a system of opportunities. "One profound characteristic," says Dr. Bosanquet, "runs through the whole. And that is, that the world does not let us alone ; it drives us from pillar to post, and the very chapter of accidents, as we call it, confronts us with an extraordinary mixture of opportunity and suffering, which is itself opportunity."\* In relation to this material world our primary interest is, therefore, to take advantage of the opportunities it offers, or, as I shall put it, to master our environment. Only we must remember that we can do this, as Bacon told us long ago, not by defying, but by obeying nature.

The second class of interests are those which centre in the world of our fellow-men. They belong to us as social beings. If the world of nature is a world of opportunities, the world of man is a world of co-operation. It is only as members of society that we can achieve any interests worthy of the name. As members of society we make our own the interests of our fellow-men, so that our life becomes in part identical with theirs. We see this most clearly in our ethical experience. "Only a revived social consciousness," says Edw. Caird, " . . .

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\* Individuality and Value, p. 27.

can bring moral deliverance ; and he who will not take upon himself the burden of the evil of others, and even accept it also as if it were his own guilt, can never get rid of his own. But for him who does accept this responsibility for all evil . . . the very principle that makes him, so to speak, throw down the barrier between his own life and that of others . . . also gives him a consciousness of unity with that power of goodness which is ‘ above all, in all, and through all.’ ”\*

Thirdly, we have our ideal interests, the interests which are concerned with what Plato calls the world of absolute justice and beauty and temperance. Their achievement is the central problem of our life. It involves at any rate humility, the renunciation of all hostile interests, loyalty to the uttermost, and in some form or other the love of God.

Our material and social interests find their completion in these ideal interests, which by permeating our whole personal life give to it unity and coherence. “The simplest act of social duty,” says Bosanquet, “taught by habituation to the growing citizen, say courage or soberness, has in it a motive, or we may say really implies an awakening and a yearning of the soul, which first expresses itself in loyalty to society and in good citizenship, but which can find no final satisfaction till it completes itself in the knowledge and thought of God, in union with whom alone the individual comes to be that which he really is.”† “Man’s final ends,” says Laurie, “are ideals—always

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\* Kant. II., p. 624.

† Individuality, p. 403.

ideals; he seeks The Truth, and in the very act ever affirms Absolute Truth; he seeks The Good, and so ever affirms the Absolute Good; he feels and longs after Beauty, and so ever affirms Absolute Beauty.”\*

Personality, then, we shall take to imply unity and intrinsic value, and we shall think of it as creating its own value by the achievement of its interests—material, social, and ideal. But these characteristics do not exhaust the meaning of personality. They only make explicit certain of its implications. We must consider them only as elements in our idea of what a person is, this idea being derived from our consciousness of ourselves as persons and incapable of complete analysis. We all know what we mean by a person, and we must hold fast to this notion of living, concrete persons if we would avoid the errors of abstraction.

Our next step will be to ask whether our conception of education as the training of personality, in the sense just described, will explain our actual experience in our schools. Do we as a matter of fact try to train our boys as individual persons? And do they as persons exhibit the characteristics we have noted? I think a little reflection will show that the effectiveness of our teaching and the educational influence of the school's corporate life can be explained only by the full recognition of our boys and girls as persons.

Let us take first our actual attitude as teachers. When we are doing our best work as masters do we not deal with Brown and Jones as persons? Is there not that

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\* *Synthetica*, vol. ii., p. 19.



personal intercourse between us which is absent when we treat them as units in a mass or as congeries of mental processes ? Is not one test of a good master his ability to come into contact with the boy's inner self, his power to make the boy feel that he is understood ? When Tom Brown and his comrades listened to the Doctor's sermon they heard not the cold, clear voice of one giving advice and warning from serene heights to those who were struggling and sinning below, but the warm, living voice of one who was fighting for them and by their sides, and calling on them to help him and themselves and one another.

If, on the other hand, we think of our boys as something less than persons, as essentially inferior to ourselves, we shall inevitably attempt to mould them according to our own ideas. We shall try to make them treat our standards of knowledge or morality as unconditionally binding. But if we do so we shall hinder, and not help, their progress towards true personality, for they will not be achieving value for themselves. Authority and punishment are necessary, but they must always be means to the attainment of a higher end—they must be used to strengthen the boy's higher interests against the lower, like voices of friends and kinsfolk recalling him to his better self.

This instinctive recognition of the boy's personality might be illustrated from every department of school life. I will confine myself to our treatment of our boys when teaching. For perhaps it might be argued that we respect a boy's personality in so far as he is a moral

agent, but that when we are teaching him in class we must deal with him as an inferior, the recipient of our thoughts or knowledge with no independent rights. This objection is true in a limited sense, or rather it represents a subordinate aspect of the truth. What I take to be our true attitude as teachers may be described as follows : We feel ourselves when teaching to be in the presence of certain facts, be they facts of grammar or moral truths, and these facts claim recognition from us and our boys alike. We by hypothesis know the facts better than our boys, and our business is therefore to help them to share our knowledge, or, if possible, to improve upon it. It is not our knowledge as such that we pass on. We have the right to teach only in so far as we are the representatives of the realities around us, the organs of the truth of things through whom this truth is made the property of other minds. We are, therefore, not infallible authorities, but co-workers with our boys in the appreciation of reality. But if this is a true description of our attitude as teachers, clearly it involves the recognition of the boys' personalities ; we teach them as individuals like ourselves, members of the same world, with the right, so far as they are capable of it, to an independent assimilation of the truth. No doubt this statement must be modified in the case of teachers of quite young children, but in principle it applies to teachers of every kind.

Again, if we hold fast to the conception of our boys as persons, we can explain the influence exerted by the school's corporate life. If school life does a boy any good

it is just because the school makes him more of a person, and it does this by helping him to achieve in some form or other one or more of the types of interest we have distinguished. I cannot attempt to work this out in detail, but must content myself with illustrating it by considering one interest only, the boy's interest in the ethical ideal.

Let us notice first that the school is a place specially adapted for the development of this interest. I do not mean merely that the ethical interest can be achieved only by active membership in a society, and the school is a very intimate society. I mean also that in the school the ethical ideal takes a very real and practical shape. For in the school we meet with most, if not all, the problems of our moral life in their most simple and natural form. Life is here lived upon a smaller scale than in the world of men; boys' instincts are more direct, their motives usually less complex than those of older people. The side issues which confuse us in later life are largely absent, and it is easier to view the events of daily life in the light of the ideal. A boy, for instance, is guilty of some petty act of meanness, perhaps one which would be hardly noticed in the world outside, but you know and you have to help him to realise that he has sinned against one of the great laws of social life. This imminence of the ideal is particularly evident in school games, and gives to them their ethical significance. "A game," says a wise schoolmaster, "has in 'a boy's' eyes certain high spiritual affinities which are missed by our older selves. In his inner thought they have a

sacred character, just as with primitive man ; and this is the cause of his deep seriousness on the subject.”\* He feels that every deed of pluck or cowardice, every unselfish pass or wrongful keeping of the ball is an act done in the sight of heaven, a sign of loyalty or treason to the moral law.

Great schoolmasters have always shared the boys’ sense of the spiritual realities only half hidden behind the veil of the school’s daily work and play. It was Dr. Arnold who, at the sight of a knot of vicious or careless boys gathered round the great school-house fire, said that it made him think he could see the devil in the midst of them.† In other words, Arnold realised more vividly than most of us that school life is a field for the development of a boy’s whole personality, and not least of his highest type of interest, such as his interest in the ethical ideal.

I hope that I have now succeeded in making clear the point of view from which school teaching and school-life may be regarded as effective instruments for the training of personality. If the line of argument which I have tried to illustrate is valid, we may assume that our view of education as the training of boys as persons does, as a matter of fact, explain our school experience.

The next point to be considered is whether our insistence upon personality will justify itself in the field of theory. Will this insistence make our theory of education more comprehensive and consistent ? Will it

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\* Skrine : *Pastor Agnorum*, p. 76.

† Stanley’s *Life of Dr. Arnold*. Chapter III.

enable us to define more definitely the educational point of view ? In trying to show that it will help us in both these respects, I must again limit myself to a few illustrations of a point of view, anything like a complete discussion would mean a treatise on education.

In the first place, then, our view of education will help to save us from two educational heresies which are finding adherents at the present time, and which I shall call respectively the psychological and the sociological heresy. These heresies are rife because we have not yet attained to a clear delimitation of the field of education. We have not made up our minds as to what processes or results have educational significance, and what processes or results have not. We have not a clear conception of the educational point of view. Our failure in this respect is due partly to the fact that education has not yet achieved its independence of its sister sciences, psychology and sociology, from which much of its doctrine is derived. We still occasionally hear education spoken of as applied psychology, or as a branch of sociology, sometimes by those who should know better.

But this confusion of thought is detrimental both to education and, if an outsider may be allowed to say so, in some measure also to psychology and sociology. To take one point only, psychology and sociology are pure sciences, having for their object the scientific investigation of certain classes of phenomena ; they are not primarily concerned with the morals to be drawn from the truths which they discover. Education, on the other hand, is a normative science of which the fundamental

aim is not to increase our knowledge but to guide our action. This difference involves many others into which I cannot enter here. I only wish to emphasize the fact that each science will be hindered in its proper work if it does not maintain its relative independence of the others. When, therefore, I speak of the psychological and sociological heresies in education, I am not venturing to criticise the methods of psychology and sociology as such. For such a task I am quite unqualified. My argument is directed against the introduction into educational theory of certain processes of reasoning which, as it seems to me, are alien to the educational point of view.

The educational doctrine which I have called the psychological heresy fixes our attention upon the various processes which go on in the boy's mind to the comparative neglect of his personality as a whole. A statement of this heresy in its most flagrant form is given by Professor Thorndike in his "Principles of Teaching." "If there existed," he says, "a perfect and complete knowledge of human nature—a complete science of psychology—it would tell the effect of every possible stimulus and the cause of every possible response in every possible human being. A teacher could then know just what the result of any act of his would be, could prophesy just what the effect of such and such a page read or punishment given or dress worn would be ; just how to get any particular response or attention to this object, memory of this fact, or comprehension of that principle."\* And

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\* p. 9.

again in the "Journal of Educational Psychology" for January, 1910, he says: "Just as the science and art of agriculture depend upon chemistry and botany, so the art of education depends upon physiology and psychology. . . . A complete science of psychology . . . would aid us to use human beings for the world's welfare with the same surety of the result that we now have when we use falling bodies or chemical elements."\*

It is hardly necessary to point out that these extracts imply a view of education totally opposed to that which we have found to be consistent with our experience. It ignores all the characteristics of the boy as a living person, or if it does not ignore them altogether it keeps them in the background. In particular it treats our boys as if they were automata capable of being stimulated by doses of reading or of punishment, or as if they were musical instruments upon which the educator can play at will.

Assuming the possibility of such a science of psychology as that here described, I believe that a knowledge of it would be positively harmful to the teacher. We should have to make ignorance of psychology an essential qualification for any master or mistress in our schools. And the reason would be this. If a master enters his class-room knowing that he can manipulate his pupils' minds with as much certainty as he can chemical elements or falling bodies, then his attitude towards them will be that of a chemist or mechanic, but assuredly not that of a teacher. For a teacher, as we have seen, treats his boys as ends, not means, as creating their own value by

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\* p. 6.

their own activity, not as having value implanted in them from without. Above all, Thorndike's view shows an absence of that reverence for personality which is so marked a characteristic of all great schoolmasters. Let us rather hear Edw. Bowen: "The experience of teachers," he tells us, "has not generally brought the conviction that specially-directed efforts can do much to change a boy's nature. It does most of the changing for itself. The building grows, like the temple of old, without sound of mallet and trowel. What we can do is to arrange matters so as to give virtue her best chance. We can prevent tendencies from blossoming into acts, and render pitfalls visible. How much indirectly and unconsciously we can do, none but the recording angel knows." "You can, and you should," says Chiffers, "go straight to the heart of every individual boy." Well, a fellow-creature's mind is a serious and sacred thing. You may enter into that arcanum once a year, shoeless. And in the effort to control the spirit of a pupil—in the craving for moral power and visible guiding—lie some of the chief temptations of a schoolmaster's work.

And again, in speaking of the morbid effort to exercise conscious influence, "Fancy the attitude of mind of the captain of the eleven who should say at the beginning of an innings, 'Go to, I will now use my moral influence on my team.'"

I turn now to the second educational heresy—the sociological heresy. The root error of this heresy is that it treats the boy not as a relatively independent person,



but primarily as a member of society, that is, either of society as it actually exists, or of society as it may be expected to become in a few years time. As an illustration of this standpoint I will quote some statements of Professor Dewey. "We must take the child," he says, "as a member of society in the broadest sense, and demand whatever is necessary to enable the child to recognise all his social relations, and to carry them out."\* He then specifies the relations of voter, subject of law, member of a family, worker, member of some neighbourhood and community.

From this point of view the school's aim is described as follows: "The moral responsibility of the school, and of those who conduct it, is to society. The school is fundamentally an institution erected by society to do a certain specific work—to exercise a certain specific function in maintaining the life and advancing the welfare of society."† And that this society is not an ideal society, but society as it actually exists, appears clear from Dewey's argument. The school is to reproduce in typical form "the processes by which society keeps itself going." The life of the school is to reproduce on a smaller scale the life of the world around it. "The child," he tells us, "ought to have exactly the same motives for right-doing, and be judged by exactly the same standard in the school, as the adult in the wider social life to which he belongs."‡ And it is important

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\* Educational Essays, p. 28.

† Essays, p. 27.

‡ *ibid.*, p. 37.

to notice that social life is regarded as essentially industrial. This is shown by the interesting description given by Dewey of the typical school-building, which is symbolic of the occupations of its inmates. The school-building consists of two stories, each with four rooms and a central hall. On the ground floor we should have a kitchen, a dining-room, a shop, and a room for textile industries, with a library in the central hall. Upstairs would come the physical and chemical laboratory, the biological laboratory, rooms for art and music, and a museum in the centre.\*

No one, I think, can read Dewey's writings on education without finding them most suggestive, and I am not attempting any statement of his position as a whole. But the doctrine in the extracts I have given is clearly tainted by the sociological heresy. The child's personality is recognised to some extent, but only in so far as he is a member of society. There is no recognition of a personal life aiming at ideals which in their essence are more than social. "We get no moral ideals," Dewey says, "no moral standards for school life excepting as we interpret these in social terms."† One with God is a majority would not be written on his school walls. If religion means the realisation of our relations with unseen and absolute realities, Dewey's schoolboy is regarded as having no religion. The implied conception of personality is therefore fatally defective. A boy is more than a member of society: he is also a citizen of

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\* *School and Society*.

† *Essays*, p. 33.

the unseen world. Hence Dewey's ideal must be supplemented by Professor Muirhead's when he tells us\* that "the main problem of the immediate future is to reinspire our educational system with the religious idea, the idea that the task to which the teacher is called is nothing less than the opening of the soul to all the influences, spiritual, social, æsthetic, cosmic, that call to it from the unseen, and thus to fit it for its true life."

By holding fast, therefore, to the principles of personality we can maintain the educational point of view against these heresies. But heresies are always one-sided statements of partial truths, and our principle enables us to see the element of truth in the views we have rejected.

Of the three great spheres of interest which we have distinguished, mastery of environment, the common life, and devotion to the ideal, Thorndike is concerned primarily with the first, and Dewey with the first and second. Their theories are incomplete because they fail to do justice to ideal interests, but they have much to teach us in regard to the subjects of which they treat.

From Thorndike, for instance, we may learn the importance of many details in the boy's school environment which we are tempted to neglect. From Dewey we may learn that our curriculum and teaching methods in the broadest sense must provide the boy with an introduction to his after life, and therefore he must begin to achieve at school the interests which will occupy his manhood.

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\* Reports on Moral Training, ed. Sadler, vol. i., p. 68.

To work these lessons out in detail would lead us too far afield, and I must proceed to touch very briefly upon one or two characteristics of the process of education viewed in the light of our conception of personality.

First, then, education as the training of personality will not be a thing of rules and observances, though these, too, have their place. Its atmosphere is rather one of freedom, of inspiration, and of adventure. For it aims at stimulating the boy's achievement, not at merely bringing him under discipline. I would apply to education Wm. Wallace's description of morality. Let us not forget—we all do forget—that the art of education is not how *not* to do it. Its function is not merely to keep us from falling, nor is it to help us to become proper. It is to teach us to love God with all our hearts and strength and mind, and our neighbours as ourselves. . . . In the work of education you enter on a grand enterprise, a search for the holy Grail, which will bring you to strange lands and perilous seas. For you cannot say, interpreting, 'Thus far and no further, merely according to the bond and duty' . . . You follow by what has been, what is ruled and accomplished, but you follow after what is not yet.\*

If we like we may describe this aspect of education by saying that education is concerned with the boy's self-realisation, or that self-activity is the law of mental growth. Only we must remember that self-realisation means also self-transcendence, the achievement of interests deeper and wider than those which we call our

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\* See Lectures, p. 210.

personal interests. It involves hardship and self-renunciation. The man who chooses the life of thought and wisdom, says Socrates in the *Philebus*,\* it may be lives without pleasure ; and who knows whether this may not be the most divine life of all ? “ The higher, yet obvious and dominant experience,” says Dr. Bosanquet, “ carries you at least as far as, for example, strength and endurance, love and sacrifice, the making and achievement of souls.”†

Perhaps you will now object that this statement at any rate is an example of the abstract theorisings which have little bearing on the boy's actual life at school. On the contrary I believe that school life ought to be literally the making and achieving of souls, and we fail to recognise it as such partly because our conception of the boy's personality and interests is too abstract, and we do not realise the significance of the details of his daily life and work. Consider, for example, the average boy in an elementary school who in later life will be an artisan. How can the school in his case do what we claim ? Now I fully admit that complete success is not to be expected, if only for the reason that the classes are usually too large and the boy escapes too soon from all educational control. But this does not alter the essential character of the work which the school is called upon to do, and that work is to help the boy to become in the true sense a person. How this is to be accomplished we cannot discuss in detail ; I can only mention one or two points by way of illustration. Cannot, for instance, the school help the boy to feel

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\* 33 B.

† Individuality and Value, p. 5.

the joy of doing a job well, that is, of mastering some fraction of his environment? This satisfaction of the craftsman in the work of his own hands, the consciousness of having finished what he undertook in a workmanlike manner in spite of difficulties and weariness, is a feeling which a boy can experience while at school, and yet if it stays with him through life it will go far towards redeeming his soul from the hopelessness of failure. So, too, loyalty to his comrades, and the larger view which leads him to forget his own narrow interests in his absorption in the common good, can also be taught at school if the right means are chosen. In these and other ways the school can, and in many cases actually does, give the boy ideals capable of fuller realisation in his after life, in whatever sphere his work may lie. It thus plays its part in the creation of a man with interests of absolute and intrinsic value. And apart from any theoretical discussion, do we not, as a plain matter of fact, know some boys and girls who in the course of their school life have passed through the vale of soul-making spoken of by Keats,\* and have achieved not merely certain interests, but in some degree personality as a whole?

But if the school is really to be a field in which souls are made, every department of the school's life and work must do justice to each of the great fields of interest as elements in the boy's concrete personality. It must help him to master some portion of his environment; it must in some way develop his social interests; and

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\* Quoted by A. C. Bradley: *Oxford Lectures*, p. 222.

it must increase the unity and coherence of his personality by promoting the subordination of all his lower interests to his interests in the ideal world. May I illustrate what I mean by an example from a narrow field—the teaching of geometry. In teaching geometry we must, by exercises in drawing and measuring, and by a course of theory, enable a boy to gain a mastery over the simple geometrical properties of the bodies in his environment. And I would add that this mastery must be thorough. But our teaching must bear a direct relation to the boy's present and after life. I refer not only to the study of geometry as a direct preparation for such callings as that of an engineer, but also to the utility of geometry as an aid to the appreciation of the scientific thought common to educated men and to its practical use in daily life. "There is no reason," says Dr. Nunn, "why mathematics should not be taught systematically as a means necessary for appreciating the main results of human industry and invention, including those embodied in the mechanism of commerce and the financial machinery of civic and national life." And, lastly, we have the ideal purpose of learning geometry which must permeate all our teaching of it. This purpose has been described as follows by one of the most suggestive thinkers of our day. "For the health of the moral life," says Bertrand Russell, "for ennobling the tone of an age or nation, the austere virtues have a strange power, exceeding the power of those not informed and purified by thought. Of these austere virtues the love of truth is the chief, and in mathematics, more than

elsewhere, the love of truth may find encouragement for waning faith. Every great study is not only an end in itself, but also a means of creating and sustaining a lofty habit of mind, and this purpose should be kept always in view throughout the teaching and learning of mathematics.”\*

It would, I think, be possible to show that the conception of education which I have endeavoured to indicate gives us a point of view from which we can discuss the various problems of organisation, curriculum, and method which meet us in our schools. It will not forthwith solve these problems. Truth, whether of thought or practice, is not so easily attained, but it will show us the direction in which progress can be made. Upon this inquiry, however, we cannot enter, as I wish in conclusion to say a few words on the character and equipment of the teacher.

What kind of person must the master be if he is to be a trainer of concrete persons ?

In the first place, he must himself be a person, not an instructor merely or a good disciplinarian. Professor Adams, in his suggestive book on the “Evolution of Educational Theory,” seems to anticipate the disappearance of personality in teachers. “What the future has to do,” he says, “is to improve the machine. All the present indications . . . point . . . to a future in which the profession will be made up of men and women of a high level of average intelligence and virtue, but without any special initiative, officered by

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\* Essays, p. 86.



a small body of highly-specialised men and women of particularly high capacity and attainments, and with a large amount of initiation.”\* And again, “Under the increasingly centralised system that we have foreshadowed we find little promise in the future of a diminution in the number of institutionalised children. The tendency is clearly towards increasing the number and intensifying the type.”†

I can only say that such a future appears to me to be one which we must strive with all our earnestness to avert, for in it education would be like Homer’s ghost in Hades—only a shadow of its former self. Unfortunately we cannot deny the tendency to magnify the machine. We hear of the introduction of methods, whether Montessori or other, as if method in itself, apart from personality, were a remedy for our weakness. I doubt, however, whether this tendency is on the increase.

Not that method is unimportant. A master must have as the foundation for his work a mastery of his material. He must be a skilled workman, and his material is perhaps the hardest of all to work, namely, human nature. Hence we welcome all the light which can come from a study of psychology and of teaching methods new and old. And still more must we insist upon the necessity for that personal sympathy with boys of which we have already spoken. But a mastery of his material is only one branch of the master’s interest. He must have also a social interest in education. He is the organ of the community for handing on its life.

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\* *Evolution of Educational Theory*, p. 187. † *ibid.*, p. 388.

Hence he must hear the call which comes to him from the spirit of his time. He must be able to distinguish the true demands of the age from the cries which would lead astray. And in our own day that is no easy task. It demands a wide outlook and broad sympathies, but also a judgment both disciplined and fearless. And this, as well as a lasting inspiration for his work, he will gain only by the achievement of his own interests in some form of the ideal. In the case of the majority this central interest will be religious, using the term religious in its widest sense, but it may also take the shape of an interest in truth or beauty, that is, it may be philosophical or artistic. Still, whatever be the particular aspect under which he views the ultimate reality, he must in his own fashion be a servant of the ideal. To him must be applicable in some measure the description Plato gives of those who in his ideal city are to mould the souls of men, a description of which my words to-night have been little more than an expansion. The true educators, Plato tells us, "when engaged upon their work will often turn their eyes upwards and downwards; I mean that they will first look at absolute justice and beauty and temperance, and again at the human copy, and will mingle and temper the various elements of life into the image of a man; and this they will conceive according to that other image, which, when existing among men, Homer calls the form and likeness of God."\*

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\* Rep. vi., 501, tr. Jowett.

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